



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Farm Service Agency

November 2006

Fact Sheet

Notice of Funds Availability



Background

Funding is available from the USDA Farm Service Agency for proposals that enable American Indian farmers, ranchers, and youth primarily located on Indian reservations to understand and have access to the various FSA Agriculture Credit Programs. Proposals are being requested from eligible 501 © (3) nonprofit organizations, land grant institutions, and Federally-Recognized Indian Tribal Governments.

Proposals should demonstrate a mechanism that will provide credit outreach and promotion, pre-loan education, one-on-one loan application preparation assistance and other related services specific to FSA's Agricultural Credit Programs.

Application Deadline

Applications should be submitted as soon as possible, but no later than November 24, 2006. Submit applications and other required materials to:

Mike Hill, Acting Director
Outreach Staff
Farm Service Agency, USDA,
STOP 0511, Suite 508
Portals Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.,
Washington, DC 20250-0511.

Due to security issues at the National FSA headquarters, please allow extra time if the proposal will be mailed.

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be non-profit organizations, federally-recognized Indian Tribal Governments, or land

grant institutions. Applications must show sufficient information to determine their eligibility.

Information Needed to Submit Applications

- ✓ *Form SF-424* – Application for Federal Assistance
- ✓ *Form SF-424A* – Information – Non-Construction Programs
- ✓ *Form SF-424B* – Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
- ✓ *Table of Contents* – a detailed table of contents must immediately follow the required federal forms. The Table of Contents should include page numbers for each component of the proposal. Pagination should begin immediately following the Table of Contents.
- ✓ *Proposal Summary* – A one page summary of the Project Proposal that includes the title of the project, a description of the project (including goals and tasks to be accomplished), the names of the individuals responsible for conducting and completing the tasks, and the expected time frame for completing all tasks, not to exceed twelve months.
- ✓ *Eligibility* – A detailed discussion, not to exceed two pages, describing how the applicant meets the eligibility requirements. In addition, the applicant must describe all other collaborative organizations that may be involved in the project.
- ✓ *Proposal Narrative* – The narrative portion of the project proposal must be in a font such as Times New Roman, 12 point or comparable font, and must include the following:
 - **Project Title** – the title of the proposed project must not exceed 100 characters, yet represent the major thrust of the project;
 - **Information Sheet** – A separate one page information sheet that lists each of the evaluation criteria followed by the page numbers of all relevant material and documentation contained in the proposal which address or support the criteria;
 - **Goals and Objectives of the Project** – A clear statement of the ultimate goals and objectives of the project must be presented.

- **Evaluation Criteria** – Each of the evaluation criteria must be addressed specifically and individually by category. These criteria should be in narrative form with any specific supporting documentation attached as addenda and should be placed directly following the proposal narrative. If other materials, including financial statements will be used to support any evaluation criteria, it should also be placed directly following the proposal narrative. The applicant must also propose and delineate significant agency participation in the project.

Evaluation Criteria and Weight

All responsive proposals will be reviewed based on the following criteria:

Proposer's Commitment and Resources (15 points) – Applicant must show their commitment to the project. Applicant must explain their experience, qualifications, competency, and availability of personnel and resources to direct and carry out the project. Applicant must also demonstrate its ability to be able to deliver these credit outreach services utilizing the new FSA online Farm Business Plan software program.

Feasibility and Policy Consistency (20 points) – The proposal must clearly describe its objectives and feasibility.

A detailed description of the anticipated number of underserved American Indian farmers, ranchers, and youth served and collaborative partnerships (20 points) – Points will be awarded for partnerships and collaborative initiatives with other agencies or organizations. Additionally, the areas and numbers of American Indian farmers, ranchers and youth who would benefit from the services offered.

Outreach to American Indian farmers, ranchers and youths (10 points) – Points will be awarded for the degree of the proposal to encourage and assist American Indian farmers, ranchers, and youth to utilize various FSA agriculture credit programs.

Innovative Strategies (25 points) – Proposals should address innovative strategies for reaching the target audience. The proposal should also address the development of a data tracking system as well as ways to enhance participation in FSA Agricultural Credit programs.

Overall Quality of the Proposal (5 points) – The overall quality of the proposal will be evaluated to its degree of complying with the rules and regulations of the Notice of Funding Availability in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

Accuracy of Proposed Budget and Justification (5 points) – The budget should provide a detailed description of each budget category that includes category subtotals and clearly defines and explains each and every proposed budget line item.

Further information

A complete description of the Notice of Funding Availability is available in the Code of Federal

Register (CFR) Volume 71, No. 205/Tuesday, October 24, 2006/Department of Agriculture/Farm Service Agency/Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) Inviting Applications for the Implementation of an American Indian Credit Outreach Initiative or by logging on to the Montana FSA website at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov> and clicking on FSA funding Availability. Additional information may be received by contacting Mike Hill at 202/690-1299 or by e-mail at mike.hill@wdc.usda.gov

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